

CLAIMS

1. A cartridge, which can be detachably attached to an immunochromatographic test reader with a structure that illuminates measuring light onto an immunochromatographic test strip included in an immunochromatographic test utensil and that detects light arising from said immunochromatographic test strip as a result of illumination of the measuring light, comprising:

a holding section for holding said immunochromatographic test utensil;

information storage means for storing information concerning said immunochromatographic test utensil; and

a structure for introducing said immunochromatographic test utensil to a position where the measuring light is illuminated onto said immunochromatographic test strip included in said immunochromatographic test utensil.

2. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein the information concerning said immunochromatographic test utensil includes information concerning an inspection using said immunochromatographic test utensil.

3. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein the information concerning said immunochromatographic test utensil includes information that identifies said immunochromatographic test utensil.

4. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein the information concerning said immunochromatographic test utensil includes information concerning a colored region reading process corresponding to said immunochromatographic test strip included in said

immunochematographic test utensil.

5. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein said immunochematographic test utensil includes a casing that holds said immunochematographic test strip, and

5 wherein the information concerning said immunochematographic test utensil includes information concerning a colored region reading process corresponding to said casing included in said immunochematographic test utensil.

10 6. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein the information concerning said immunochematographic test utensil includes information concerning a method of reading by said reader.

15 7. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein the information concerning said immunochematographic test utensil includes information concerning methods of performing computations on data obtained by said reader.

8. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein the information concerning said immunochematographic test utensil includes information concerning colored regions read by said reader.

20 9. A cartridge according to claim 1, further comprising:
information sending means, sending the information concerning said immunochematographic test utensil, stored in said information storage means, to said reader.

10. A cartridge according to claim 1, further comprising:
a label for identifying said immunochematographic test utensil.

25 11. A cartridge according to claim 1, wherein said holding section comprises a recess with a shape corresponding to the outer

shape of said immunochromatographic test utensil.

12. A cartridge according to claim 1, further comprising:

a first surface facing said immunochromatographic test utensil held in said holding section;

5 a second surface opposing said first surface; and

a through hole, arranged at a portion of said holding section that overlaps with said immunochromatographic test utensil, communicating said first surface and said second surface.

10 13. An immunochromatographic test reader, with a structure that illuminates measuring light onto an immunochromatographic test strip included in an immunochromatographic test utensil and that detects light arising from said immunochromatographic test strip as a result of illumination of the measuring light, comprising:

15 a structure for holding a cartridge according to any one of claims 1 to 12 at a position where the measuring light is illuminated onto said immunochromatographic test strip; and

20 information acquiring means for acquiring information concerning said immunochromatographic test utensil stored in said information storage means, in the state in which said cartridge is mounted.

14. An immunochromatographic test reader according to claim 13, further comprising:

an illuminating optical system illuminating the measuring light onto said immunochromatographic test strip; and

25 a detecting optical system detecting a reflected light from said immunochromatographic test strip resulting from the illumination of the

measuring light by said illuminating optical system;

wherein said holding section of said cartridge includes a recess of a shape corresponding to the outer shape of said immunochromatographic test utensil, and said recess has a depth such that the optical axis of said illuminating optical system and the optical axis of said detecting optical system intersect at a surface of said immunochromatographic test strip included in said immunochromatographic test utensil in the state of being fitted into said recess.

15. An immunochromatographic test reader according to claim 14, wherein said cartridge comprises:

a first surface facing said immunochromatographic test utensil held in said holding section;

a second surface opposing said first surface; and

a through hole, arranged at a portion of said holding section that overlaps with said immunochromatographic test utensil, communicating said first surface and said second surface;

wherein said reader further comprises a structure for exposing said through hole, provided in said cartridge, to the exterior of said reader in the state wherein said cartridge is introduced inside said reader.

16. An immunochromatographic test reader according to claim 13, further comprising:

an illuminating optical system illuminating the measuring light onto said immunochromatographic test strip;

a detecting optical system detecting a reflected light from said immunochromatographic test strip resulting from the illumination of the

measuring light by said illuminating optical system;

an optical head on which said illuminating optical system and said detecting optical system are provided; and

a scanning mechanism moving said cartridge introduced in said reader and said optical head in a relative manner.

17. An immunochromatographic test reader according to claim 16, wherein said scanning mechanism moves said cartridge and said optical head relative to each other at a first speed during a period, in which the measuring light is illuminated onto said immunochromatographic test strip via a window provided in said immunochromatographic test utensil, and moves said cartridge and said optical head relative to each other at a second speed higher than the first speed during a period, in which the measuring light is illuminated onto portions besides the window provided in said immunochromatographic test utensil.

18. An immunochromatographic test strip inspection system comprising:

an immunochromatographic test reader according to any one of claims 13 to 17; and

means that stores, in associated form, information concerning said immunochromatographic test utensil, which are stored in said information storage means, and information concerning colored regions read by said reader.

19. An inspection system according to claim 18, wherein the information concerning said colored regions read by said reader are sent to said cartridge and stored in said information storage means of said

cartridge.